

DEVO

Another Official A
Low C



"Flight" photograph

Zero hour on the clubhouse verandah: Sir Kingsley Wood declares the airport open. The Mayor of Exeter is on his right, with Mr. Straight. The Devon Air Race cup has nothing to do with the proceedings—other than in an ornamental capacity. No event was run this year.

JUST as flying meetings (excused by airport opening ceremonies) seem to be returning to something of their former status, meteorological conditions are doing their best to damp the renewed spark of public interest in such affairs. It rained at Luton, Ringway and Ipswich. Last Saturday, at Exeter, though no serious rain fell, the clouds were down at a few hundred feet during most of the afternoon and anybody who attempted to do anything dashing with an aeroplane was promptly engulfed in them.

However, the public rolled up (all ten thousand of them), most of the promised Service support got through, albeit with some difficulty, and the afternoon's performance continued without any serious breaks—which were, in any case, filled by an enthusiastically talkative commentator. Private owners and amateur pilots were, for the most part, deterred by the Air Ministry forecast. Very correct it was, too, but our own experience showed that, by dutiful attention to the contour map, and the work of railway engineers in days of long ago, it was possible to get through without any serious damage to the heart. It was one thing to bring a light aeroplane and quite another to lead a flight of Gauntlets—which also got through from North Weald after spending the night at Woodsford, near Dorchester.

Getting Through

With the conditions as they were, one felt particularly sorry for these No. 151 (F) Squadron pilots, who could do little more in their exhibition than dash about the sky in various exciting attitudes and altitudes. There simply wasn't room for more. The pilots of the Vildebeestes from Thorney Island, too, were unable to give their proper show, though they flew by in the bumps in two nicely packed flights before departing for home—flotation gear and all. The Lysander pilot from Old Sarum had no flotation gear, and shortly after his show and consequent departure he returned for the night, having met a large red cliff in the wrong place. On the following day, in similar conditions, he eventually chose the Taunton railway line, and overtook our own little aeroplane in a valley beside the Black Down Hills.

The flying programme actually started with fly-pasts by a Saro London from Mount Batten. Getting to Exeter at all was a good show, and the pilot, after flying about until his moment was due, eventually came by when the speeches (of which hereafter) were still in somewhat long-winded progress. Luckily, Pegasus are quiet beasts.

Followed a quick demonstration by various Straight aeroplanes and a tow-up in hopeless soaring conditions for Dr. Dewsbury with his Rhönsperber. This, all unseen and unrealised by the multitude, ended almost tragically. The

batics was given by Herr Herwarth Wendel with his Bücker Jungmeister, and his own really characteristic display had to be washed out. No chance of upward rolls and inverted loops with the cloud base at 300ft. His opening circuit of continuous slow rolls was, however, beautiful to behold, and his flick rolls, as usual with this machine, gave those previously uneducated in Bücker manners the expected shock. "Flick" really is the word for them, and it is apparently possible to stop them dead in any attitude. Herr Wendel, who has only recently recovered from the results of a serious accident while flying inverted at ground level, treated the public to just one low-altitude inverted fly-past. He will be remembered by those who visited the York International last year. Technicians who wonder at the Bücker's spectacular take-off and climb will be happy to learn that the adjustable airscrew pitch is specially fined for each performance.

Capt. Symondson's show with his old Gipsy Moth was



"Flight" photograph.

The Saro London distracts attention from the ceremonial proceedings as it scrapes along below the cloud base to open the flying display.